Birmingham Inclusive Sports Festival 2016

Report

Saturday 17th to Sunday 25th September 2016.

A FUN-FILLED WEEK OF SPORTING ACTIVITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH OR WITHOUT AN IMPAIRMENT TO TAKE PART IN...

Activities delivered by organisations in the city will include:

- Cycling, Badminton,
- Shooting, Bowls, Cricket,
- Hockey, Tennis and more...

For a full list of the FREE or minimal cost taster events taking place across Birmingham, along with details on how to book, please take a look inside or go online: sportbirmingham.org/events

“Have a go at something new... it could be fun, and you'll never know unless you try it!”
Anna Turner, BISF 2016 Ambassador
This year the Birmingham Disability Sports Forum launched the city’s fourth annual Inclusive Sports Festival programme of activities on Saturday 17th September at Queen Alexandra Specialist College in Harborne.

Aiming to build upon the past successes and momentum of previous years; the series of activity ‘open days’ included activities such as adapted cycling, golf, shooting and even Tai Chi, and were delivered over a 9-day period for residents and families in Birmingham to come along and experience inclusive or disability-specific activities that they may never have tried before.

The Birmingham Inclusive Sports Fest (BISF) is an exciting annual campaign that aims to encourage people from all walks of life, ages and abilities to have fun and be active & healthy whilst also providing the opportunity to raise the profile of local organisations in Birmingham who dedicate their time to delivering inclusive activities in their community.

BISF 2016 was supported by 32 separate clubs in total throughout the city who signed-up to offer free or minimal cost sporting activities for individuals with or without an impairment to participate in, consisting of a total of 48 sessions across 26 different sports.

This year, the campaign benefitted from financial support and endorsement from local company, Voice Mobile who sponsored the week. In addition to working closely with the local sports clubs and coaches delivering the sessions, the festival was also profiled and backed by the BBC Get Inspired team, as well as official ambassador and Paralympian Anna Turney. The strong partnership with Queen Alexandra College continued from previous years, with the BISF 2016 launch day being hosted at the fully-inclusive venue with a number of ‘have-a-go’ opportunities based on site.

These were all crucial factors in securing high quality sessions; attracting participants from various parts of the city as well as ensuring that those with an impairment were given the required support and enjoyed the best possible experience.

As the festival drew to a close on Sunday 25th September, feedback began to be received from the delivery organisations (please see below examples) with 219 individuals recorded as having taken part - exceeding the 2015 total of 174.
Testimonials

“We welcomed 4 young men with learning difficulties and their support worker from Sanctuary Housing Association to the Bowls. It was a fabulous afternoon. The lads loved playing and our volunteers loved helping out. We gave each of the lads a small goody bag.” Ray Woods - Erdington Court Bowls Club

“All of the 24 new participants that attended the LD Tennis session came due to it being promoted as part of the BISF Programme. In addition, I’ve had one of the schools who wasn’t able to make it ask for some dedicated tennis sessions within school time during the summer!”
Simon Lancaster - Lead Coach, Lordswood and Circle Tennis Clubs

“Our biggest ‘win’ was having Fox Hollies School down to the event as BISF week provided them with enough advanced notice to be able to organise a few pupils to come down to the Adaptive Cycling sessions. We’re now looking at a dedicated morning session for Fox Hollies alone, thereby expanding our provision. I am sure we planted a few seeds at the Launch Day which will pay of later when people can get to us now they know we are there. New contacts were made & personally a few former colleagues were caught up with & contact re-established. An excellent event all day & all week.”
Keith Hill – Birmingham City Council Wellbeing Services Activator

“As a direct result if the classes I delivered as part of BISF week, we have been asked to quote for sessions at a local special school. Also I may be going to deliver a taster class for adults with learning disabilities. There is also a chance the local Headway people may book me :) I very much enjoyed being part of BISF and would like to find more ways to promote myself to disability groups.”
Sally Haynes-Preece – Tai Chi Instructor

“At the BISF 2014 launch event we set up a laser shooting range. There, we met Midland Mencap’s Laura Gilmour who said she’d like to get shooting into their programme of activities. We began laser shooting sessions at their centres in Weoley Castle and Sutton Coldfield in December 2015 upon their request. Things then began to happen in January 2016, when Midland Mencap asked if we could provide sessions for their young clients with air rifles, with a view to them becoming members of our club. These were arranged and delivered in June & July, for 6/7 clients. In September we had applications for four of them who we are supporting twice-a-month, with a view to them becoming full members in 2017. We’re now aiming to develop them to take part in competitive shooting.”
Trevor Haynes, Sutton Coldfield Rifle and Pistol Shooting Club
The long-term outcomes for BISF are to ensure that access into inclusive sport and recreation is improved and better communicated, and that more high quality opportunities for all individuals with an impairment are established to enable talent to flourish. Growth in the event has seen numbers rise from 137 in 2013 to 216 in 2016. In total, the programme has seen over 650 people be involved in the festival across the four year period.

There are a number of areas within the data that are up for further discussion for example the progression of ages attracted by the week.

Breakdown of Ages in Attendance (2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 11</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 11-15</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-19</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30+</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please note Chart flows clockwise with groups in key

There are a number of trends we can see continuing on from 2015, for example:

- Over 30s while reducing in percentage in 2016 still makes up the largest group of participants
- Under 11 when from being the least represented segment to the most rising from just 4% to 73%.
- 20-29yrs old despite rising from 39% to 44% make up a smaller portion of the demography owing to growth in other ages.
- 16-19yrs old least represented group needs to be addressed in terms of reasons why
Please note Chart flows clockwise with groups in key

- Wider range of impairments involved in festival this year
- LD participants made up the largest segment of the breakdown, however non impairment participants made up the second segment of participation.
- Autism was the third biggest impairment with 18% of users having autism.
- Cerebral palsy users fell from 16% to 5%.

Future Thoughts

BISF should be used as a positive platform in the city to champion the opportunities to get active, no matter your age, ability and background; inspiring people and their families and friends to have fun whilst trying new activities.

A crucial aspect in ensuring these individuals continue with their newly discovered sport/activity is to provide them with the right information, a great experience and instill confidence so that they continue to access the sessions after taster week has ended.

Understanding the best routes to promote the opportunities to new (inactive) audiences in the city is a challenge that is continually being addressed by members of the Birmingham Disability Forum. The group encourages the ongoing growth of the campaign and wider work of the forum by engaging new sporting and non-sporting (specialist service) partners that are best positioned to share valuable insight, experience and knowledge in order to increasing the number of disabled people participating in physical activity and sport.

The aspiration is to be able to develop a centralised ‘inclusive activity hub’ for people seeking to access disability-friendly recreation opportunities due to the clear benefits of such information being presented in one place. This is a unique factor of the annual BISF week; acting as a ‘live’ signposting service to members of the public who otherwise wouldn’t know where to go to find out about such activities.